



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 598

January Session, 2013

Substitute Senate Bill No. 673

Senate, April 24, 2013

The Committee on Government Administration and Elections reported through SEN. MUSTO of the 22nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION IN PUBLIC HOUSING.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2013*) (a) For purposes of this
2 section, (1) "public housing project" means dwelling accommodations
3 operated as a state or federally subsidized multifamily housing project
4 by a housing authority, nonprofit corporation or municipal developer
5 pursuant to chapter 128 of the general statutes or by the Connecticut
6 Housing Authority pursuant to chapter 129 of the general statutes; (2)
7 "housing authority", "nonprofit corporation" and "municipal
8 developer" have the same meanings as provided in section 8-39 of the
9 general statutes; and (3) "political activity" includes (A) an event
10 organized in the interests of a political party or candidate for elective
11 office; (B) initiating, circulating, or signing petitions; (C) community
12 political meetings; (D) campaigning for or against proposed
13 referendum questions, constitutional amendments, legislation and
14 municipal ordinances; or (E) expressing opinions about candidates and

15 political or social issues.

16 (b) No housing authority, nonprofit corporation, municipality or
17 municipal developer shall prohibit any tenant of a public housing
18 project from using common facilities or community rooms located
19 within such public housing project for political activity.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2013	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

Section 1(a)(2) was reworded to reference the definition of "nonprofit corporation" contained in section 8-39 of the general statutes for clarity.

GAE *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which regulates the use of common facilities at public housing projects for political activities by tenants, has no state or municipal fiscal impact. Housing authorities, nonprofit corporations, municipalities, and municipal developers can accommodate this regulation with no additional resources.

Housing authorities are autonomous governmental entities which are financed through rental collections (CGS 8-45) and the issuance of bonds (CGS 8-52). They may also accept federal and state grants (CGS 8-56) as well as donations from municipalities (CGS 8-61).

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 673*****AN ACT CONCERNING FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION IN PUBLIC HOUSING.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill bars municipalities, housing authorities, nonprofit corporations, and municipal developers from prohibiting tenants from using public housing common facilities or community rooms for political activity.

The bill defines “public housing project” as a state or federally subsidized multifamily housing project operated by a housing authority, nonprofit corporation, or municipal developer. “Housing authorities” are municipal housing authorities and the Connecticut Housing Authority (see BACKGROUND). “Nonprofit corporations” are nonprofit corporations, whose articles of incorporation have been approved by the economic and community development commissioner, that construct, rehabilitate, own, or operate housing. A “municipal developer” is a municipality acting through its legislature, or, if a town meeting, its board of selectmen, that has not established a housing authority.

“Political activity” includes:

1. an event organized for a political party or candidate for elective office;
2. initiating, circulating, or signing petitions;
3. community political meetings;
4. campaigning for or against proposed referendum questions,

constitutional amendments, legislation, and municipal ordinances; and

5. expressing opinions about candidates and political or social issues.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2013

BACKGROUND

Connecticut Housing Authority

In 1995, the legislature made the state Housing Authority a successor to the Connecticut Housing Authority and a subsidiary of the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority. The Connecticut Housing Authority had statutory responsibility for managing state housing projects.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 14 Nay 0 (04/05/2013)